

Distinguished Chairs Senator Bye, Representative Willis and ranking members and vice chairs, thank you for allowing me to speak here today. My name is Joshua Quintana and I am the Vice President of the Student Government Association at Manchester Community College. I am here voicing opposition to Senate Bill no. 844: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION, on behalf of not only myself but the Students of Manchester Community College.

At current the Governor's Budget proposes a cut of \$14.5 million to the ConnSCU System and of that \$7 million to come from the Community Colleges Block grant. Of that, from MCC we are currently cutting \$870,000 due to a midterm budget cut. Because of these cuts we are cutting services to students currently enrolled and are forcing some students to look out of state to go to college. This is coming at a time when not only are our tuition is expected to go up to maintain the institutions whose services are getting cut also We are cutting our Athletics program and students who would be using the program to advance themselves academically and athletically are now leaving the state entirely. Not only that but our Sports Facilities are still there and will only serve to be a reminder of what we have lost not only as an institution, but as a Community as a whole in Manchester.

We are not only losing Athletics, but Student Services (Counseling, Financial aid, Admissions, etc.) as well as our academic support center, are being forced to cut staff and service hours. Our Student services are being reduced and cut and these are frontline, direct impact, day to day student support areas that students require access to in order to successfully pursue both their academic and professional careers.

What is also of concern is the Governor's new Scholarship proposals that make no sense here on the community college level. They require that a student be a first time and full time student. Not only is this discriminatory to the 4,785 students currently enrolled in courses and who are part time at MCC it is a system wide issue.

I would ask that this committee and the legislature as a whole consider the issues that were raised today and I would hope that the committee would consider the full effect on the student body at the community college level and the state universities. These policies effect the system

that matriculates and aides not only more than half of all the Higher Education Students in the State but also matriculates and benefits the people of the state of Connecticut.

I hope that what I have said here can lay the groundwork so that Students, Legislators, and Colleges can come together and work on an equitable solution so that we can benefit the ConnSCU system and do what is best for the State of Connecticut and its Students.